

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 115, 124, and 126 as follows:

115. (currently amended) A method of repairing an aneurysm in a vessel using a sheath device having a housing with a first end portion and a second end portion, said method comprising the steps of:

introducing the first end portion of the sheath device into the vessel such that the second end portion is positioned outside of the vessel;

inserting a repair apparatus through an opening in the second end portion of the sheath device housing;

removing the repair apparatus from the opening in the second end portion of the sheath device housing; and

providing a sealing ~~means~~ cavity for reducing the loss of blood from the vessel during the insertion and removal of the repair apparatus.

116. (currently amended) The method of Claim 115, wherein the step of providing a sealing ~~means~~ cavity further comprises the steps of:

providing a sealing cavity formed in the sheath device housing proximate to the second end portion; and

filling the sealing cavity with a self-sealing gel-like material adapted to permit the insertion and removal of the repair apparatus through the material while forming a seal around the repair apparatus.

117. (original) The method of Claim 115, wherein the step of introducing the first end portion of the sheath device into the vessel further comprises the step of accessing the vessel through an artery.

118. (original) The method of Claim 117, wherein the artery is selected from the group consisting of: femoral artery, common iliac artery, left brachial artery, and axillary artery.

119. (original) The method of Claim 117, wherein the artery is selected from the group consisting of: left brachial artery, and axillary artery.

120. (original) The method of Claim 115, further comprising the step of maintaining the sheath in proper orientation within the vessel.

121. (original) The method of Claim 120, wherein the step of maintaining the sheath in proper orientation further comprises the step of inflating a cuff located proximate to the first end portion of the sheath device housing.

122. (original) The method of Claim 121, wherein the step of inflating the cuff further comprises the step of supplying fluid from an external source to the cuff through a passageway formed within the sheath device housing.

123. (original) The method of Claim 115, wherein the step of introducing the sheath device further comprises the steps of:

introducing a guide wire into the vessel; and
introducing the sheath device over the guide wire.

124. (currently amended) A method of reducing the loss of blood from a vessel during the surgical repair of an aneurysm in the vessel using a sheath device having a housing with a first end portion, a second end portion, and a hollow interior that permits the passage of a repair apparatus, and a sealing cavity formed in the sheath device housing proximate to the second end portion, said method comprising the steps of:

introducing the first end portion of the sheath device into the vessel proximate to the aneurysm such that the second end portion is positioned outside of the vessel; and

filling the sealing cavity with a self-sealing gel-like material adapted to permit the insertion and removal of the repair apparatus through the material and into the hollow interior while forming a seal around the repair apparatus; and

reducing the loss of blood from the vessel during the surgical repair of the aneurysm.

125. (original) The method of Claim 124, further comprising the step of inflating a cuff located proximate to the first end portion of the sheath device housing for maintaining the sheath in proper orientation.

126. (currently amended) A method of reducing the loss of blood during the surgical repair of an aneurysm in the abdominal aorta using a sheath device having a housing with a first end portion and a second end portion, said method comprising the steps of:

introducing the first end portion of the sheath device to the abdominal aorta proximate to the aneurysm through an artery;

inserting a repair apparatus through an opening in the second end portion of the sheath device housing;

removing the repair apparatus from the opening in the second end portion of the sheath device housing;

providing a sealing cavity formed in the sheath device housing proximate to the second end portion; ~~and~~

filling the sealing cavity with a self-sealing gel-like material adapted to permit the insertion and removal of the repair apparatus through the material while forming a seal around the repair apparatus; and

reducing the loss of blood during the surgical repair of the aneurysm.

REMARKS

Claims 115-126 are present in this application, and Claims 104-109 have been withdrawn from consideration. By this amendment, Claims 115, 124, and 126 are amended. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.